

Published
by the
Office of
Central
Inspection,
City of
Wichita.
Editor:
*Tom
Herschen*

2005

Volume 15

Issue 3

Construction Industry News from City Hall

*Superintendent of Central Inspection
Kurt Schroeder*

Certificate and License Renewal

Central Inspection began annual contractor license and tradesman certificate renewals on September 1, 2005. The renewal period lasts until January 31, 2006. However, if you have not renewed your contractor license by December 31, 2005, you will be unable to obtain permits or inspections until your license renewal is completed. Renewals continue through January 31, 2006 without penalty. After January 31st 2006, additional penalty fees must be assessed (see your license renewal notification/forms for information about particular license types).

Also, please remember that tradesman certificates (plumbing, mechanical, electrical) will now be bi-annual rather than annual, and that the new bi-annual certificate fee is \$20 for each two-year renewal period. You can read more detailed information about this in your license renewal letters. Also, please make sure your required insurance binders/verifications is up to date. Most delays with license renewals are due to insurance problems or the lack of required signatures on the renewal forms.

If you have questions concerning your license or certifications please call 268-4413 and ask for Kim or Cindy.

Appliance Disconnects

There has been questions raised about whether a range, oven or cook top would require a disconnect within sight of the appliance. Section 422.31(B) of the 2002 NEC states in part — “For permanently connected appliances rated over 300 volt-amperes or 1/8 hp, the branch circuit switch or circuit breaker shall be permitted to serve as the disconnecting means where the switch or circuit breaker is within sight from the appliance or is capable of being locked in the open position.” So the basic rule requires a disconnect on a range, oven or cook top and this disconnect must be within sight of the appliance.

This raises the question for cord and plug connected ranges when the plug is behind the range. The disconnecting means would not be within sight. Section 422.33(B) allows the receptacle of a household range to be at the rear base as long as it is accessible from the front by removal of a drawer.

But if we continue reading in Article 422 with Section 422.34 it states in part “A unit switch(es) with a marked –off position that is part of an appliance and ***disconnects all ungrounded conductors*** shall be permitted as the disconnecting means required by this article where other means for disconnection are provided...”

An example of what is allowed would be manual switches on each burner and oven on a range that would allow you to set the temperature but also have a marked “OFF” on each switch. An electronic controller or electric clock would not meet this requirement and as such would require a separate disconnect or cord and plug.

This requirement is for all appliances and has not been enforced equally for all the different appliances, so starting December 1, 2005 **ALL** appliances will require a disconnect within sight of the appliance. This includes built-in appliances and if using a receptacle as the disconnect it is not permitted to be located behind the appliance except as referenced above.

Tom Kerschen
Construction Inspection Supervisor, Electrical / Elevator

Upcoming Construction Code Reviews and Adoptions

- * Electrical and Elevator Code: OCI and the Board of Electrical Appeals have completed their review of proposed upgrades and amendments to Wichita’s electrical and elevator codes. In November or early December 2005, OCI plans to present to the City Council a proposed ordinance adopting the most current editions of the National Electrical Code (2005 edition) and the ANSI/ASME Safety Code for Elevators and Escalators (2004 Edition), both with some locally developed and recommended amendments/modifications.
- * Existing Buildings Rehab Code: OCI is currently reviewing the Wichita Existing Buildings Rehabilitation and Change of Use Code. The purpose of this locally written code (originally adopted in April 2001) is to remove barriers to adaptive re-use of older buildings, and to encourage the practical continued use or re-use of existing buildings and structures. Amendment or update proposals will be developed for presentation to building industry design and construction professionals during the last quarter of 2005, to the Board of Code Standards or Appeals at either their November or December 2005 meeting, and to the City Council sometime in mid-December to early January 2006.
- * Beginning in the first quarter of 2006, OCI will begin review of the 2006 International Building Code, 2006 Edition; the International Residential Code, 2006 Edition; and the 2006 editions of the International and/or Uniform Plumbing and Mechanical Codes.

Continuing Education for Certified Tradesmen

We now have in place applications for Continuing Education Credit that has been approved by both the Plumbing and Mechanical Boards. A copy is included in this issue of the Cinch. Also included is a form you may use to help you track your training and continuing education credits.

Cell Phones

Just a reminder: Our inspectors now have cell phones, which are intended to provide improved communications between inspectors and contractors. However, repeated calls to an inspector to ask him or her where they are and exactly when they are going to arrive at a particular site only serves to further delay the inspector's schedule. If you have called once and spoken with the inspector, or have left a voice message for the inspector, it doesn't help to keep calling or to leave more messages. If inspectors are in traffic, on other calls, or providing an inspection service to another customer, they will generally be unable to take your call at that time. However, inspectors are instructed to call you back as soon as possible when it is safe to do so or when they have finished another customer's inspection activity.

Scheduling Inspections

We allow you to request AM or PM inspections, however, that does not mean you will get them at the time requested, but we will try as best we can. When we get more inspections than we can cover in a day, we have to take them in the order of their location, as we do not have the time to back track across town.

Water Heaters

OCI plumbing inspectors are frequently finding appliance connectors on water heaters that do not meet the size requirements. Also, the water connectors (if used) are required to be full sized to the inside diameter, and many of them are not.

Drain Layers

If you are interested in devoting time in a code review process to upgrade our local sewer ordinance, please contact Dan Leidy at 268-4471.

Dan Leidy, Construction Inspection Supervisor,
Plumbing & Mechanical

Wasted Permit Inspections

Rapidly rising fuel costs and supply have affected almost everyone in the construction industry. When an OCI inspector drives to a site for a contractor-requested inspection, but finds the site inaccessible, locked up or not ready for the inspection, both fuel and precious inspection time is wasted. Obviously, the inspector's time could have been better spent in performing other requested/required inspections, while performing them in a more timely manner (saving the City, the inspector AND the contractor time, money and frustration). Because the city has greatly increased its geographic size and area over the past several years, travel time and fuel costs have become an issue of even greater significance.

If you have a lock-box at your project site, a hidden key or have other information the inspector needs to gain access for the scheduled inspection, please communicate that information with the inspector.

Re-Inspection Fees

"Re-inspections. A re-inspection fee may be assessed for each inspection or re-inspection when such portion of work for which an inspection is called is not complete or when corrections called for are not made. This section is not to be interpreted as requiring fees the first time a job is rejected for failure to comply with this code, but as controlling the practice of calling for inspections before the job is ready for such inspection.

Re-inspection fees may be assessed when the inspection record card is not posted or otherwise available on the work site, the required construction documents are not readily available to the inspector or for failing to provide access at the time that the inspection is requested.

To obtain a re-inspection, the applicant shall pay a fee of \$30.00 and request re-inspection of the job. In instances where re-inspection fees have been assessed, no additional inspection of the job will be performed until the required fees have been paid." (Ord 45-199)

Ray Sledge,
Building Construction Inspection Supervisor



***APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF CONTINUING EDUCATION
FOR THE CITY OF WICHITA***

COMPANY NAME _____

INSTRUCTOR _____

SUBJECT MATERIAL _____

LOCATION _____

CLASS ROOM HOURS _____

DATE OF CLASS _____

.....*Official use only, do not write below this line.*.....

APPROVED..... YES _____ NO _____

IF NOT APPROVED PLEASE STATE REASON: _____

Signed _____

Date _____

FORM 8-2005

CONT. ED.

Office of Central Inspection

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CONTINUING EDUCATION CEU LOG

Name of Certificate Holder _____

For the two-year reporting period
ending _____

As per City ordinance, each licensee is required to maintain the records used to support credits claimed, and keep attendance verification records in the form of completion certificates or other documents supporting evidence of attendance. You are required to keep these records for at least 4 years. Please use this log to track CEU 's earned.

| Dates of Activity MM DD YY | Title of Program/ Description | Name of Sponsoring Organization Location (City & State) | Instructor/Speaker's Name | Number of CEUs Earned |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | | | | |
| 2 | | | | |
| 3 | | | | |
| 4 | | | | |
| 5 | | | | |

6 _____ CEU claimed (Total lines 1-5)

7 _____ CEU carried forward from the last renewal

8 _____ Total (Minimum of 12 required)

9 _____ CEU 's carried over

*Submit to OCI with your certificate
renewal form.*

Keep a copy for your records

Technology Enhancements

OCI continues to develop and utilize new technology, in consultation with the construction industry, to improve and enhance OCI efficiency, effectiveness and overall customer service, including:

- * ***“E-Permits”***, OCI’s new Internet construction permitting and inspection scheduling service for Wichita-licensed contractors, has greatly exceeded expectations during its first eight months of operation. Contractors have been pleased with its user-friendly process, and new contractors are logging on and signing on every day. The official rollout date for “E-Permits” was February 4, 2005. Since rollout (through the end of September 2005), nearly 2,700 building and trade construction permits have been processed through “E-Permits”, and about 14,000 permit inspections have been scheduled. “E-Permits” is also saving staff time on permit processing. Nearly all “E-Permits” are being reviewed and issued within 2-4 business hours of contractor permit application submittal. Try it out. Just go to <http://permits.wichita.gov> and sign in at the [Contractor Login](#) page using your 4-digit contractor license number and your current TELUS Pin number (or go to the City of Wichita’s web page at <http://wichita.gov> and click on the “E-Permits” login on the home page). ***Remember, even if you don’t apply for permits using E-Permits, you can still review your permits, view permit activity and schedule required inspections.***
- * OCI is now working to expand the “E-Permits” permitting service to include new residential one & two family constructions, additions and accessory buildings (garages/sheds, etc.). A test e-permit for this has been developed and is being tested in-house by staff. Testing with a limited number of new homebuilders should get under way in October 2005. OCI intends to roll out this Internet permitting service for new construction to all residential new construction contractors by mid-November 2005.
- * All OCI field inspection personnel are currently being equipped with wireless laptops in their vehicles, portable to the field and to various remote locations outside City Hall. The electrical inspection staff has been equipped since July 2005, and has been successfully using the new technology to obtain inspection schedules, add inspection results, add additional inspections on the fly, and to locate additional permit and contractor data/inspection histories. All other construction inspection field staff will be trained and equipped during the last quarter of 2005. All wireless laptop information is available and completed in real time, allowing faster and more complete processing of permit information and inspection activity. The new technology, in association with inspector cell phones, is allowing inspectors to spend more time in the field and less time at their desks, thus improving inspector response times while stabilizing and even decreasing inspector overtime (and the overall cost of service).

Sign Permits

In the past year, there have been several incidents where licensed Building Contractors have built Sign Bases and installed Commercial Signage on those bases and/or Commercial buildings. All commercial plans are stamped with notification that approval of building plans does not approve signage provisions. The following excerpts from the Sign Code (Chapter 24) provide information and background pertaining to Sign Code requirements. Sign bases may be built by building contractors provided the footing and foundations are inspected as usual but no installation of signage is allowed until a Sign Permit is applied for by a licensed sign contractor and approved by the Office of Central Inspection for installation either on monuments, poles or building walls.

24.04.050 Permits required.

Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, it is unlawful for any person to place, locate, erect, construct, reconstruct, remodel, relocate, alter, hang, affix or create by painting, a sign within the city without first obtaining a permit from the superintendent of central inspection who shall issue permits for the following:

(a) Permanent Sign Permit. This permit shall be required for all new permanent signs erected, constructed, reconstructed, remodeled, relocated, altered, hung, affixed or created by painting, or for signs altered to increase the height or area. A permanent sign permit shall not have an expiration date.

ACCESSIBLE FIXED SEATING FOR RESTAURANTS AND DRINKING ESTABLISHMENTS

Section 5.1 of the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) indicates that 5% of fixed tables, but not less than one, shall be made accessible for use by the disabled. The seating layout provided by the architect will need to reflect the number, type and location of fixed seats to be provided for patrons of the restaurant or drinking establishment. In addition, the plan shall show the location of accessible seating and shall be dispersed throughout the facility. The wheelchair space (30 X 48 inch space) shall be shown on the seating layout and shall not obstruct the required aisles necessary to maintain proper exiting (see 2000 International Building Code Section 1004.3.1 – 1004.3.1.3.3). Accessible seating (tables and chairs) shall comply with ADA Section 4.32 for height and space requirements.

Example: In a restaurant that has separate smoking and non-smoking sections and/or bar area, seating shall be dispersed in an effort to provide accessible seating in each area for patrons up to the required amount. If dining areas include raised or sunken floor areas within the restaurant, then dispersal consideration shall include those areas as well. The goal is to provide the disabled patron with as many seating options as possible and to accommodate the variety of services available to all patrons of the restaurant.

Requirements based on type of seating:

Booth seating:

- 1). Remove one bench seat and replace with loose chairs that can be removed to accommodate a disabled patron at the table, or
- 2). Place the accessible wheelchair space at the head of the booth table. In this arrangement, you may need to use a longer table to accommodate the additional person, so that, adequate elbowroom is provided.

Fixed square, rectangular or circular tables with fixed seats:

- 1). Remove fixed seating sufficient to accommodate the required wheelchair space.

Seating at raised bars and counters where alcoholic beverages are served:

- 1): In all cases, raised bars and counters shall include a lowered section (60 inch minimum length) for a disabled patron where the seating capacity exceeds 10 persons (calculated based on one person for each 24 inches of bar or counter length). Note: This requirement applies whether the seating is fixed or not. Re: ADA Section 5.2 and 18.05.785 of the City code.

ACCESSIBLE PARKING STANDARDS CHANGE

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2006

Effective on or after January 1, 2006 for building permits reviewed and issued for new construction projects/development that require or provide new parking; new, expanded or reconstructed parking lots; or parking lots that are being re-striped as part of a building permit, all accessible parking spaces shall be designed and installed in accordance with the "Universal Parking Design" standards of Appendix A4.6.3 of the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibilities Guidelines, as amended.

The above statement is a local amendment (18.05.825 of the City Code) adopted in May of this year and applies to development within the boundaries of the City of Wichita.

24.04.060 Permit application and issuance.

(a) Application for permits shall be made to the superintendent of central inspection upon forms provided by the city and shall be accompanied by such information as may be required to assure compliance with all appropriate regulations. This may include drawings indicating the sign legend or advertising message, location, dimensions, construction and structural design. If the superintendent of central inspection deems it necessary, he may also require that a licensed engineer furnish information concerning structural design of the sign and the proposed attachments.

(b) The superintendent of central inspection shall issue a permit for a sign when an application therefore has been made and the sign complies with all applicable regulations of the City.

(d) Only licensed and bonded sign hangers may place, locate, erect, construct, reconstruct, remodel, relocate, alter, hang, affix or create by painting any sign requiring a permit.

Randy Sparkman

Zoning, License & Sign Supervisor

268-4479



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